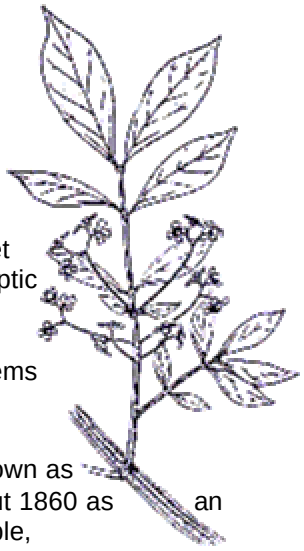
Winged Burning Bush

Euonymus alatus



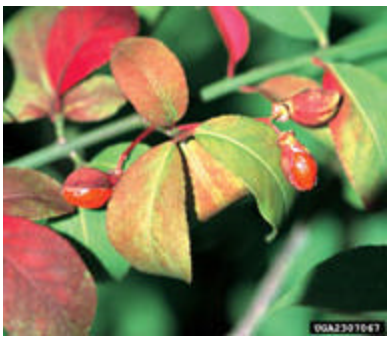
Description: Winged burning bush is a deciduous shrub that will grow to 15 to 20 feet tall and equally as wide. It is a member of the Staff-tree family (Celastraceae) with elliptic to obovate leaves, which are opposite or sub-opposite, 1 to 3 inches long and 1/2 to 1 1/4 inches wide. The leaves turn a bright red in the fall before dropping. Occurring in May to early June, the small green flowers are inconspicuous. The green to brown stems have two to four prominent corky wings.

Habitat: Native to northeastern Asia to central China, winged burning bush, also known as winged euonymus and burning bush euonymus, was introduced into this country about 1860 as an ornamental shrub. It is very adaptable to a variety of soils, including being pH adaptable, performing best in well drained soils and poorest in waterlogged soils. It grows well in full shade and full sun but shows stress in soils subject to drought.

Distribution: Winged burning bush, because of its spectacularly red autumn foliage, is one of the most popular shrubs on the market. Consequently, its distribution is limited only by its hardiness, extending from New England south to northern Florida and the Gulf Coast. It is commonly used in landscaping, especially for malls and highways. However, reports suggest winged burning bush may spread by seed from wherever it is used as an ornamental shrub.

Ecology and Threat: Shade tolerant. Colonizes by root suckers and spreads by animal-dispersed seeds. The threat to natural areas from burning bush euonymus is that it shades out native herbs and crowds out native shrubs. The shrub may become one of our most troublesome plants because of the ease with which its seeds are spread, the readiness of germination, its adaptability to various soils, its tolerance of full shade and its spectacular fall foliage

May



October

April

Control: Control is therefore considered difficult once a parent plant has become established. It will probably not be much of a problem in cities, towns or thickly developed areas, but any nearby woodland where birds can roost may quickly become infested. Therefore, abstaining from using the plant becomes the most important step toward control. Continued use of winged burning bush may result in it becoming

a widespread invasive. No information on control of this species was found researching this fact sheet. Attempt control as for any shrub species.

- **Reference:** www.vnps.org/invasive/invfseual.htm, www.invasive.org